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Editorial

A PROBLEM that constantly besets the editor of a journal like this is how far he ought to press contributors to define or explicate technical terms that they have occasion to use—not only theological terms, but scientific, philosophical and psychological terms. Much the same can be said of historical and literary allusions. How much knowledge in this field or that can reasonably be taken for granted in the generality of our readers? No rule of thumb answer is possible. We take this opportunity of asking future contributors to bear the problem in mind and in each instance to use their best discretion. In view of the happy circumstance that we are always enrolling new readers, a maxim that will probably be appreciated is: When in doubt define, or be as explicit as possible. Further, be at pains to avoid the reproach of unnecessarily using theological or other jargon. The best writing, whether theological or otherwise, does not incur this reproach.

At the same time, we would point out that readers can help themselves by taking steps to be equipped not only with English and other dictionaries, but also with serviceable works of reference. We called attention last year to the great merits of *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*, edited by Prof. F. L. Cross and published by the Oxford University Press. There is also *A Theological Word Book of the Bible*, edited by Prof. Alan Richardson and published by the S.C.M. Press, and for those who read German works *A Theological German Vocabulary* by Mr W. M. Mosse, published by Macmillan. The latest volume of this kind to come to our notice is a *Dictionary of Pastoral Psychology*, edited by Dr Vergilius Ferm and published by Peter Owen (35s.). It originates in the U.S.A. where the clergy as a whole take a keener interest in psychology than is the case in England, but it contains a great deal of information that will be useful here to those who are puzzled by technical and not so technical psychological terminology. Some of the very extensive cross-references are rather odd, e.g. "*idleness:* see creative thinking", "*sermon, its healing function:* see funerals", "*over eagerness:* see in-laws"!

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A different but no less useful work of reference, that has just appeared in a third edition, is *World Christian Handbook* 1957 (World Dominion Press, 15s.). It contains an astonishing amount of detailed statistical information about Christian churches and missions in all lands, together with briefer estimates of the number of ad-

herents of other religions, and also a directory of all sorts of Christian societies. It should be in public libraries.

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Since a substantial proportion of the readers of THEOLOGY are laymen who have not had reason to study ancient languages, we have devised another maxim for our contributors. When they have occasion to make quotations in Greek, Latin, etc.—which they are quite at liberty to do—they are asked in future to translate the quotation in the text of the article (or letter or book review, as the case may be) and to place the original language in a footnote or alternatively within brackets. This arrangement should facilitate wider readability without in any way lowering the standards of learning that we seek to maintain. We solicit the patience of readers if it takes some time to establish a consistent practice in this matter.

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In churches where the lessons are now read, either habitually or occasionally, from the Revised Standard Version it has hitherto been tiresome that the Apocrypha has not been available in that version. This defect has now been made good, and the R.S.V. of *The Apocrypha of the Old Testament* has been published by Thomas Nelson and Sons (18s.). It has similar qualities to the translation of the Old and New Testaments and is also based on a careful consideration of the textual evidence. The General Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church is to be congratulated on having taken the initiative that set the work in motion. It was carried through by a distinguished group of American scholars.

We have also received a new *Introduction to the Apocrypha* by Prof. B. M. Metzger (Oxford University Press, 28s.). He served on the committee that produced the R.S.V., and this companion to it appears at an opportune moment. In addition to supplying information about the Apocrypha in relation to the Canon, and prolegomena to the several books comprised in it, it has chapters on the Apocrypha and the New Testament, on its history in the Church, and on its pervasive influence, together with a select bibliography.

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A new edition of the late Sir Frederic Kenyon's well-known book, *Our Bible and the Ancient Manuscripts* (Eyre and Spottiswoode, 42s.), which was first published in 1895, has been revised and brought up to date by Dr A. W. Adams and has a brief introductory memoir by Prof. G. R. Driver. It is handsomely produced with photographic illustrations and can be read with interest by the general reader as well as by the theological student.

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Broad statements are often made about the reaction of the Church to the industrial revolution and the estrangement of the working

classes from organized religion. It was time that more specific research was done on the subject, and the first two articles in this number throw fresh light upon it.

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The article by Mr Pearce is the first of a series, that will appear from time to time, reporting on experiments in new ways of worship, realizations of Christian community, etc.

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The correspondence about "Intinction" has shown that there are lively differences of opinion about whether this method of administering the sacrament is desirable or not. For our part we do not think that hygienic scruples about receiving from the common cup should be lightly dismissed, but we should not regard either intinction or separate communion cups as a satisfactory solution of the problem. Although no one has suggested it, we believe that there is a strong case for reviewing Protestant objections to communion in one kind. If it appeared that those objections were no longer decisive, liberty to receive or not to receive from the chalice could be allowed, and the corporate symbolism could be secured by the use of a single loaf which is visibly broken and shared instead of separate wafers.

The Church and the Proletariat

THE relative absence of working-class people from the Church has long been a source of concern to all those who have not been content to attribute it to mere perversity. In his brilliant Maurice Lectures (1951), Langmead Casserley provided a simple and plausible explanation of the problem. "The unwillingness of the working-class masses to attend public worship," Casserley declared, "dates from the lengthy period during which it was impossible for them to do so, for the simple reason that most of them had no church to attend."[1] The alienation of the working classes from the Church was traced back directly to the Church's failure in the eighteenth century to provide priests and churches for the rapidly growing populations in the new industrial towns. In consequence, two or three generations grew up without religious instruction, and by the time the necessary provision was made the "prevailingly irreligious culture-pattern of English proletarian life was already an accomplished and obstinate fact".[2] The Oxford Movement, Methodism and Christian Socialism were too late to do more than mitigate the harsher features of this secularism and take the sting from the hostility with which the Church was regarded by this section of the community.

The purpose of this article is to examine the adequacy of Casserley's theory by expanding his illustration of its operation in the City of Birmingham.[3] Comparative figures quoted in the minute books of the Birmingham Society for Building and Endowing Churches within

[1] J. V. Langmead Casserley (1952), *The Retreat from Christianity in the Modern World*, p. 112. [2] Ibid., p. 110. [3] Ibid.

the Borough suggest that the inadequacy of the provision of churches and clergy in Birmingham was substantially greater than in other industrial centres such as Leeds, Sheffield, Liverpool and Manchester. Birmingham should thus provide a particularly suitable test case for Casserley's hypothesis.

The examination of church accommodation in Birmingham leads to three conclusions.

(*a*) During the eighteenth and the early part of the nineteenth century, church accommodation was grossly inadequate. At the beginning of the eighteenth century there were two churches in the town—the parish church of St Martin's and the chapel of St John the Baptist, which belonged properly to the ancient parish of Aston. The town also possessed a Quaker meeting-house and two Presbyterian chapels, but the rector of the parish church catered for the spiritual needs of the bulk of the 15,000 inhabitants. The old parish of St Martin's covered a very large area and in 1708 an Act of Parliament was obtained, authorizing its division by the formation of a new parish and the building of a new church. The preamble of the Act stated that:

> "Whereas the Town of Birmingham, in the County of Warwickshire, being a Market Town of great Trade and Commerce, has become very populous, and hath but one Church in it, which is not sufficient to contain the greater part of the Inhabitants, whereby they are deprived of the Benefit of Divine Service performed there: and the Coemitary of Church Yard thereof is so little that the Deceased Persons cannot have decent burial."

Although the building of St Philip's was not completed until some time later, the church was consecrated in 1715. St Bartholomew, a small chapel-of-ease, was next to be erected, and in 1771 a new Act was obtained for the building of two further chapels. The preamble of the Act stated that "there are but two churches and one small chapel in the said town, which together are not capable of containing one-sixth of the inhabitants professing the doctrine of the Church of England, to the great reproach of civil society and contempt of Holy Religion".

At the end of the eighteenth century the Church of England possessed two churches and three chapels-of-ease, but the population had risen from 15,000 to 70,000. It is true, however, that during the century the number of chapels and meeting-houses belonging to other denominations increased from three to almost thirty.

The first real burst of church building took place after the Napoleonic wars. These churches were usually sited on the very edge of the built-up areas and the houses always spread rapidly around them. Spurred on by building societies such as the "Ten Churches Fund", church building soon became a continuous process. This boom in church building in Birmingham was typical of what was going on all over England and Wales. It is recorded that in the twenty years between 1831 and 1851, 2,029 Anglican churches and chapels were built.[1]

[1] Census of Great Britain, 1851, *Religious Worship in England and Wales*, p. 12.

In 1865 the Church Extension Society, which had been formed "to relieve the spiritual destitution of the most crowded parts of the town", had to take account of the "centrifugal movement" of residents away from the centre of the city. In 1897 authority was obtained for the destruction of two city churches, Christ Church and St Peter's, with a view to providing churches at the circumference where they were now needed.

The position of the parishes surrounding Birmingham, with the favoured exception of Edgbaston, was much the same as that of St Martin's. In the old parish of Aston, for example, the population increased from 12,000 in 1801 to 237,000 in 1891. The vicar still remained responsible for the whole area until the middle of the century, for the ancient chapelries had no district assigned to them. By 1896 twenty-five districts had been formed from the ancient parish, often without adequate endowment or residence for the vicar.

Church building continued unabated until the first world war. During the second half of the century, the number of churches in the ancient parishes of Aston and Birmingham was more than doubled —an eloquent testimony to the vigour with which this work was pursued. The Free Churches also continued to build chapels and meeting-houses, the precise number of which are hard to assess. It would seem that at the turn of the century there would be some sixty places of worship other than those of the Church of England and the Roman Catholic Church.

(*b*) During the eighteenth and the early part of the nineteenth century, church accommodation in Birmingham was not only inadequate, but also discriminative. The pews at most of the churches were the property of private owners. The Old Town Books of St Martin's indicate that the practice of reserving the best seats in the parish church for those who could afford to pay for them, dated from the middle of the seventeenth century. The annual rental at this time was fourpence per sitting. Rented pews were carefully labelled with the names of the owners and padlocked to discourage trespassers. At times when the fashionable demand exceeded the supply, pews at the parish church were sold at auction by the owners or advertised to be let on lease. Bunce records an advertisement which appeared in local newspapers in 1812: "St Martin's Church. To be let (on lease, if desired) the most distinguished Pew in this Church, late in the occupation of S. T. Galton, Esq., in front of the gallery directly opposite the Pulpit. Apply to Mr James Bellamy, 18 Whittal Street."[1] As Mr Bellamy was one of the churchwardens, Bunce concluded that the transaction must have been considered quite in order.

Baynes, in his account of St Philip's Church, made it clear that for a very long period the possession of wealth determined both one's position in the church when alive and one's place in the churchyard when dead. At the first vestry meeting (1715), after the consecration of St Philip's, rules were laid down for the allocation of seats:

[1] J. T. Bunce (1875), *History of Old St Martin's, Birmingham*, p. 21.

> "Ordered (to avoid all disturbances in ye Church) yt every person shall take their place in their seat as they come, and not strive for any particular place."
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> "Ordered, yt if it shall happen there should be any dispute between any persons about taking any place in ye seat, ye person who subscribes most to ye said Church shall be preferred."[1]

There is no record, according to Baynes, as to whether any dispute was settled in this manner.

In churches built under the Church Building Acts of the nineteenth century, pew rents were permitted in order to make it possible for poorly endowed churches to pay their clergy. Pew rents were intended, however, to be a temporary measure, to cease when the church was financially established, and one-fifth of the seating was required to be free. As the Free and Open Church Society pointed out, the latter condition was not always observed. In any case, such "free sittings" were often occupied by the school children and, generally speaking, consisted of open benches, in marked contrast to the appropriated seats in the form of pews.[2]

Such groups as the Incorporated Free and Open Church Association gradually organized opinion against these practices. It was not considered a good way of maintaining the clergy, and in the poorer parishes it was often extremely difficult to collect the rents. The practice was not without its defenders, especially in the more well-to-do parishes, where in some cases it survives to the present day. Canon Morse, for example, asserted that: "I cannot in all cases condemn pew rents, for I have seen the good results of the system during my ten years' incumbency of St John's, Ladywood, Birmingham. Had the seats all been free I do not think that the Edgbaston people who contributed so largely to supply the various needs of the parish would have attended the church."[3]

Ironically, the system of pew rents worked best in the well-to-do parishes for whose circumstances the Church Building Acts had not intended this practice. In poorer parishes, where the vicar was dependent upon pew rents for his stipend, they proved to be a more fruitful source of resentment than of clerical income.

(*c*) Provision of church accommodation in Birmingham during the second half of the nineteenth century was considerably greater than the demand for it. The third annual report (1855) of the Birmingham Society for Building and Endowing Churches within the Borough makes it clear that the Society was encountering some criticism of its policy of building new churches while existing buildings were often far from fully used. The 1851 Census of Religious Attendance indicated that empty seats were common, and in the Birmingham census of attendance in 1892 it was reported that two-thirds of the Anglican

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[1] H. Baynes (1915), *Two Centuries of Church Life, 1715–1915. St Philip's, Birmingham*, pp. 25, 26.

[2] E. A. Knox (1898), *History of Church Building in Birmingham*, p. 75.

[3] *The Free and Open Church Advocate*, September 1893, pp. 66, 67.

churches were more than half empty for the morning service and that the attendance was very little better in the evening.[1]

Assuming Dr Casserley to be correct, and that the inadequate church accommodation and pastoral care between approximately 1700 and 1831 had caused the working-class pattern of life to become solidly secular, the population of the town was still relatively small. Four-fifths of Birmingham's population, as it existed in 1900, had arrived from the country after parish accommodation and pastoral care had become available—but for the most part they didn't go to church. Further, Dr Casserley himself quotes Elliott-Binns's statement to the effect that in 1856 it was estimated that 6 per cent of the working class attended church in the country and only 2 per cent in the towns. It seems highly probable that immigrants to the industrial towns had to a large extent already severed their connexion with the church before they left the villages.

Dr Casserley himself completes the confusion by setting the Oxford Movement and the Christian Socialist Movement in the credit balance against the secular atmosphere resulting from the Church's failure to take account of the industrial revolution. The Christian Socialists, however, were not trying to redress the lack of church accommodation, but the Church's disregard for the spiritual relevance of social righteousness. The same can be said to a large extent of the role of the Oxford Movement's slum priests and sisters in winning back the lost confidence of the working-class people. They built churches, it is true, but such activities were only one expression of the renewed love of the poor. Illustrative of the new concept of pastoral work is the concluding section of a letter from the Rev. Thomas Pollock of the Church of St Alban the Martyr to the *Daily Post*, urging an improvement in the sanitary conditions of the crowded district in which he worked: "If I breathe bad air, or live in dirt willingly, I am a suicide. If I force others to do this, or do not do my best to help them, I am a murderer."[2]

Inadequate church accommodation might account for an attitude of indifference, but it does not explain the growing unpopularity of the Established Church amongst the working classes in the eighteenth century—an unpopularity which amongst some sections was to flare into positive hatred in the first half of the nineteenth century. It would seem likely that the failure of the Church to provide pastoral care and church accommodation in the industrial cities, the failure of the Church to protect the rights of the village labourers and to protest at the severity of the sentences passed upon the rioters of 1830, the failure of the Church to protect the industrial labourers against overlong hours, inadequate wages and bad living conditions, were all expressions of more important underlying factors.

One can be grateful to Dr Casserley for pointing out the grave lag in the provision of pastoral care for the population of the new industrial towns in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. As an

[1] *The Birmingham News*, 17 December 1892.

[2] Anon. (1912), *Father Pollock and His Brother: Mission Priests of St Albans, Birmingham*, p. 50.

explanation for the alienation of the working classes from the Church, however, it does not do justice to the complexity of the facts. It could well be that, far from having found the explanation, Dr Casserley has elevated what is no more than a symptom of some more substantial factor to the status of a causal hypothesis.

R. H. T. Thompson.

Religion and the Working Classes

The sociological aspect of religious belief has been grossly neglected by Christian historians. In the rapidly changing social conditions of the last two hundred years, this neglect has been responsible for the tragic failure of the churches in Britain to recognize the missionary situation which has grown up on their own doorsteps. Without any accurate information on this subject, historians have been satisfied with such inadequate generalizations as the Marxist claim that religion has been an opiate of the people, sapping the revolutionary vitality of the working classes; or the similar view expressed by Halévy and a number of Nonconformist scholars that religious beliefs amongst the working classes have provided a "social cement", preserving British society from the revolutionary movements which have afflicted less godly countries. Again, it has often been assumed, without any evidence, that there has been a marked decline in the working-class habit of church-going in the last hundred years, and that there is something novel about the contemporary estrangement between organized religion and the working classes. All these lightly accepted assumptions lead easily to serious misconceptions about the social impact of religion and, in particular, about the religious allegiance of the industrial working classes.

If for no other reason, therefore, than for the light it sheds on the developing relationship between the churches and one particular industrial community, we would have to welcome Canon Wickham's historical study of the situation in Sheffield[1] as a notable pioneer work. He has brought to this study the experience of many years as an Industrial Chaplain, together with an acute insight into the complex historical problems involved in his subject, and a sensitivity to the life of his adopted city, which combine to make it a moving and yet disturbing book. The picture that emerges from Canon Wickham's social-historical analysis is not a cheerful one for church people. No summary can do justice to the first five chapters of the book, but the main pattern can be clearly discerned. This shows, in the first place, a small town of some 45,105 souls in 1801, swelling to 135,310 in 1851, and on to 380,793 in 1901 and to over half a million to-day. Against the background of this tremendous increase in population, the churches in this strongly Evangelical, Radical, Nonconformist

[1] E. R. Wickham, *Church and People in an Industrial City*, Lutterworth, 1957, 30s.

town appeared for some time to retain their hold on a significant proportion of the community, but then, in the present century, a sustained decline in their numbers and influence occurred. As Canon Wickham shows, this decline was due, not to the loss of the working classes, but to the large-scale desertion by the "middling classes"—the shop-keepers, small business men, clerks and artisans. The great bulk of the industrial working classes in the Sheffield cutlery and steel trades never supported the churches in any numbers. The churches of Sheffield are and always have been middle-class institutions, catering for different social groups within this class, but never succeeding in winning the allegiance of more than a small handful of working-class people.

The twin conclusions that the churches of the country have been supported by the middle classes, and that the working classes as a whole have been indifferent to the institutions of religion, have been reached before by the more perceptive commentators on the religious situation over the last hundred years. Thus Horace Mann, writing his Report on the Census of Religious Worship in 1851, gave great emphasis to the neglect of religion by the artisan class:

> They are unconscious Secularists—engrossed by the demands, the trials, or the pleasures of the passing hour, and ignorant or careless of a future. These are never or but seldom seen in our religious congregations, and the melancholy fact is thus impressed upon our notice that the classes which are most in need of the restraints and consolations of religion are the classes which are most without them.[1]

And the other side of the religious situation was pointed out by Edward Miall, the editor of the *Nonconformist* and one of the ablest church leaders of the mid-nineteenth century, when he observed that "British Christianity is essentially the Christianity developed by a middle-class soil", and went on to show at length the debilitating effects of this association.[2] Later surveys, both local and national, have pointed to the same conclusions. It is immensely valuable, however, to have these conclusions established statistically and sociologically in a single industrial area and over a long period of time, and one is led to wonder how far the same pattern would be revealed by similar investigations in other industrial centres such as Birmingham, Bristol and East London. There will certainly be local variations, but there is plenty of reason to believe that the Sheffield pattern is in fact a microcosm of the relationship between social classes and religious institutions over the whole country. If this is so, it makes nonsense of the "opiate" and "social cement" theories, and proves that no decline in working-class church-going ever took place, because the working classes have never attended church.

In a single volume it is clearly impossible to deal fully with every part of the subject of this book, and Canon Wickham has been forced

[1] *Census of Religious Worship in England and Wales: Accounts and Papers*, 1852–3, LXXXIX. Mann went on to suggest reasons for this anti-religious attitude, and to suggest remedies.

[2] A. Miall, *Life of Edward Miall*, 1884, pp. 151–2, quoting an article written by Miall in 1849.

to select his material carefully. But there is one omission in his account which is surprising because of its relevance to the main theme of the book. He makes no attempt to describe the religious attitudes of the working classes, or the indigenous religious institutions in which these attitudes have occasionally expressed themselves. These points are so germane to the subject under discussion that no justification is needed for a brief examination of them here. It should be stated, first of all, that working-class religious attitudes are part and parcel of a characteristic culture-pattern, which has evolved with the emergence of the industrial working classes as a distinct social group. This culture, conditioned by the perpetual struggle to maintain a livelihood by wage labour in an urban society, has emphasized the concrete, particular and personal aspects of life, and has discounted the stress on abstract thinking and individualism which are the dominant features of middle-class attitudes. It has been centred in the family and the home, and its boundary has been drawn round the immediate locality—the complex of streets, shops, public houses and club rooms within which the working-class communities have grown and preserved their vitality.

The difference between this traditional working-class culture-pattern and the corresponding culture of the middle and upper classes is important because, like working-class culture as a whole, working-class attitudes towards religion are concrete and personal. They distrust religious dogma, as they distrust all forms of abstract speculation, and they place paramount importance on good conduct as the fruit of religion. Working-class spokesmen have frequently quoted the parable of the Good Samaritan and the Sermon on the Mount, and have been quick to recognize goodness in its concrete, incarnational, New Testament form. The trouble is that to the working-class mind the dogmatic, theological preaching, which has been associated with our middle-class church bodies, is something quite alien, and—worse than that—it often appears to be hypocritical and unjust. Many examples could be cited to illustrate this reaction. Consider, for instance, the following letter, which appeared in the correspondence columns of Miall's *Nonconformist* a hundred years ago. It professed to be from "One who works hard and sometimes thinks", and described the attempt of a working man to find an adequate religious expression for his faith. Although unattached to any church, he says "I have hope I am not irreligious", and goes on:

> Nearly all the preaching I have heard—I hope I shall be understood—has been too religious. I have never heard a minister preach what was not true and good, but the New Testament in their hands is very unsatisfactory to my mind . . . is there no application beyond a merely abstract one, in the teachings of Christ? . . . When I find that our guides are our guides, I am one of their humble followers, though as time wears on I feel myself more isolated and more obstinate that the many things we have at heart shall be done without them.[1]

This letter is a remarkable testimony to the lack of sympathy which even the best-intentioned working-class people have felt and still

[1] *Nonconformist*, 14 November 1855.

feel when they go to church or chapel—unless, of course, they are prepared to abandon their hopes and aspirations as members of their social class. Set alongside this the vigorous anonymous article which appeared in *Fraser's Magazine* in 1866 attempting to explain working class non-attendance at church. The author gives three reasons: (i) "The skilled operative in England, unlike his Scottish brother, is eminently practical and not at all given to metaphysics and dogma. In religion especially he is *ethical*, rather than either doctrinal or aesthetic." (ii) "The skilled workman is, to an unusual degree, a lover of clearness, sincerity and fair play; and he does not fail to perceive that in meeting religious difficulties the clergy seldom display any of these qualties." (iii) "It is impossible for the working man not to feel that the clergy (of all denominations) have neglected some of the most obvious of their duties, or have performed them inefficiently or perfunctorily" (the author seems to have some conception of the social gospel in mind here).[1] The perspicuity of this writer was matched by that of Thomas Wright, a working man who, under the pseudonym "The Journeyman Engineer", wrote many shrewd and entertaining essays on working-class life in the second half of the nineteenth century. In one of these essays he expressed the attitude of his class towards religion with typical pungency:

> To speak of widespread infidelity among the working classes, or of their being *actively* opposed to religion, or religious institutions, is simply to talk nonsense. Such irreligion as does exist among them applies chiefly to mere ceremonials, is passive and arises from indifference. . . . While there is nothing in the Church to attract the working classes on purely religious grounds, those social or conventional reasons which are often the sole inducement to other classes for attending church do not exist in their case. . . . I think it must be admitted that the working class indifference to the Church is ascribable less to an irreligious feeling than to a contempt for the desecration of the spirit of religion under the guise of a ceremonial systemization of it. The Church, as it stands, is emphatically not the Church of the people.[2]

Wright was considering the Church of England in this passage, but his remarks could have been applied to other denominations also.

From these and similar statements it becomes obvious that the working classes of Great Britain cannot be dismissed as irreligious merely because they have become estranged from the churches. On the contrary, there is much evidence to show that they possess a strong religious tradition, emphasizing personal conduct and attaching little importance to institutional forms. The tradition has, however, occasionally taken institutional forms and, although they have rarely survived for many years, these expressions of working-class religious aspirations are a rewarding subject for study. The "Chartist Churches" of the 1840s and the "Labour Churches" of the 1890s were strikingly similar attempts to express working-class community spirit and respect for the good life in religious terms, and we would like to know much more about these movements. On a much larger scale, the success of the Primitive Methodists and other simple forms of

[1] *Fraser's Magazine*, July 1869: "Why Skilled Workmen don't go to Church".
[2] Thomas Wright, *The Great Unwashed*, London, 1868, pp. 83–4, 92, and 94.

Nonconformist worship among the mining communities of Durham, South Wales, Cornwall and elsewhere provide instructive examples of the way in which small self-governing religious bodies can be assimilated into the culture-pattern of some forms of working-class life. The most prominent features of churches which manage to achieve this assimilation are community singing and down-to-earth preaching by well-known local figures. The chapel thus becomes an adjunct to the intensely lived local community life, serving a valuable educational and spiritual function. Religious groups of this nature, indigenous to working-class societies, can be found in most industrial areas—particularly those with a strongly developed sense of locality —but they are usually very small and their existence is often precarious.

Although the normal working-class reaction to the organized religion of our middle-class churches has been one of indifference tempered by cynicism and even hostility, a small number of clergymen of all denominations have succeeded in winning the respect of their working-class parishioners. When a local priest or minister has come to understand his people in a working-class district, and to sympathize with them, preaching to their needs and acting as spokesman for them, the common people have heard him gladly. J. R. Stephens, ex-Wesleyan Methodist minister and Chartist leader, who eventually became the head of a happy patriarchal community round his church at Staleybridge, was one of the first of these, but he has been followed by many others, including Anglican Ritualist priests in slum parishes, Methodists, Unitarians and Roman Catholics. It is important to remember, however, that these men owed their following amongst the working-class communities to which they ministered to their personal embodiment of religion in terms of sympathy, love and sanctity. The fact that they were—or are to-day—the local representatives of this or that religious institution was—and still is—of comparatively slight importance.

A treatment of working-class religious attitudes along these lines would have been a very useful addition to Canon Wickham's sociological analysis of the history of the churches in Sheffield, but the judgment already expressed—that his account is an immensely valuable contribution to our knowledge—still stands. The final chapter of the book, moreover, is more than valuable: it is prophetic. Prophetic, that is, in Canon Wickham's own definition of the word, as meaning "understanding the signs of the times". All the fruit of his experience and wisdom is packed into this remarkable chapter, setting out with a sureness and authority unusual in the writing of churchmen on social matters the conclusions which he draws from his survey. He then goes on to indicate the theological insights by which these conclusions can be satisfactorily interpreted, and to outline the course of action by which the churches should confront the task of industrial mission to-day. Briefly, his plan is that the churches should give full support to this work in terms of money and manpower, and that the mission must be tackled systematically in each industrial centre. Such an approach will cut across old barriers of

denomination and ecclesiastical jurisdiction, but, as Canon Wickham points out, the pattern of this work is determined by the institutions of our industrial society, and these have grown up regardless of the boundaries of parish, circuit or province. Moreover, denominational rivalries are a luxury which cannot be afforded in the present situation, so that it is an essential part of industrial mission strategy that the different churches in an area should agree on their respective functions in the mission. All this will require careful planning and co-ordination at the centre, which presupposes a thorough understanding by church leaders of the problems involved. There are enormous difficulties to be overcome before this plan can be worked out in practice. But it is to be hoped that the churches of Great Britain to-day will take notice of the case, argued with such authority and urgency by Canon Wickham, for pressing on immediately with the attempt to turn the plan into practical policy. For, as he says, there can be no doubt that, in the estrangement of the working classes from the church, "the church faces a missionary problem in the country as acute as anywhere in the world".

R. A. Buchanan.

Studies in Texts

THE UNJUST STEWARD AND THE INTERPRETATION OF LUKE 16. 9

It seems now to be generally agreed that the main point of this rather difficult parable lies in the word "wisely" in v. 8. Faced with a sudden crisis, the steward, while acting dishonestly, showed a promptitude, a resolution and a resourcefulness that ensured his whole future. The sons of light are bidden to be equally resourceful. Because vv. 10–13 and perhaps also v. 9 deal with the use of money, commentators have often taken it that the steward's cleverness in regard to money should teach us that we also have a duty to be wise in material matters. The argument of this article is that it is just this interpretation which is responsible for all the difficulties of the passage.

First, in v. 8, how are we to interpret the words "the Lord"? It can be either the steward's master or Christ. Many commentators, wishing to exonerate Jesus from the charge of commending sharp practice, take it as the steward's master. Gore,[1] for example, praises the R.V. for removing the occasion of this childish mistake, with its—quite unwarranted—translation "*his* lord". The R.S.V., but without addition to the text, follows the same line of interpretation and renders "the master". However, it hardly seems likely that the master would commend a man who had cheated him, unless he had previously, in T. W. Manson's words, "secured himself against pecuniary

[1] *New Commentary on Holy Scripture*, p. 229.

loss".[1] But this is most improbable, since the whole point of the parable must be that the steward's plan did succeed and did gain his end for him. The attempt to divide this and the next verse into its component parts does not solve the question unequivocally. The second half of v. 8 seems to come from the mouth of Jesus or perhaps from the evangelist, and this might suggest that the whole of v. 8 represents the verdict of the Lord, that is, Christ. But, on the other hand, the abrupt change to the first person in v. 9, "And I say unto you", suggests that here we have the beginning of Jesus's comment. If this is so, the first half of v. 8 will be the closing words of the parable, the second half the words of the evangelist and v. 9 the words of Jesus. On the balance, it seems simpler to accept the former alternative that the Lord means Christ, and that vv. 8 and 9 are his words, Luke making the abrupt change of person in order to introduce faithfully a striking saying of Jesus, of the meaning of which he was in any case none too certain. Thus to-day, commentators such as Creed[2] and Jeremias[3] plainly take "the Lord" to mean Christ, while others such as Dodd[4] and Manson leave it as an open question with perhaps an inclination in the same direction, since in any case it is not the steward's morality but his astuteness that is praised. We too may, I think, safely conclude that it was Jesus who commended the steward.

With regard to v. 9, two questions arise: What does it mean? and Does it really belong to the parable or was it added on by the evangelist along with vv. 10–13?

First, in this verse, do "friends" and "they" refer to the same persons? At first sight one would think so, but then we are faced with the difficulty that these friends must be capable of receiving us into eternal habitations. Findlay[5] accepts this and paraphrases, "Make friends . . . because your friends will get you to heaven". In this interpretation he was anticipated by St Augustine as quoted by Plummer[6] on p. 386. But this is not the same as "they will *receive* you". Therefore, as a rule, either the friends are regarded as the angels, or else it is assumed that there is a change of subject and that "they" is a circumlocution for God. Thus Jeremias paraphrases "Gain for yourself an intercessor, so that God may receive you", and adds that "such changes are typically Semitic". One does not need to be much of a Semitist to observe that, if a simpler interpretation could be found, it would be more typical of almost any language not to change the subject so abruptly in the middle of a sentence.

In any case, what does the verse mean? Almost everyone renders it, Although money is a dubious commodity, if you use it properly you can win the eternal friendship of God (e.g. Gore, Plummer, Creed, Manson and Jeremias). Only Findlay squarely faces the difficulty of relating this to Jesus's other sayings about wealth, and suggests that, taken literally, this would be "a justification for the people who have tried to atone for a lifetime of sharp practice by leaving

[1] *The Sayings of Jesus*, p. 292. [2] *The Gospel according to St Luke*, p. 202.
[3] *The Parables of Jesus*, pp. 33 f. [4] *The Parables of the Kingdom*, p. 30.
[5] *Jesus and His Parables*, pp. 77–86. [6] *St Luke* (I.C.C.).

some of their ill-gotten money to the church". The difficulty comes with the phrase "the mammon of *unrighteousness*". Are we to take it literally? Findlay's solution is to declare that there is no more reason to translate "the mammon of unrighteousness" as money dishonestly made than to insist that "the steward of injustice" means the unjust steward, and proceeds to whitewash the steward. But his suggestion that the steward, to ingratiate himself with the debtors, simply relinquished his legitimate commission, though interesting, is not really what the story says, and, moreover, it leads Findlay into such a tortuous application of the parable that it is difficult to follow him. There is no doubt that it is this phrase, "the mammon of unrighteousness", that tests our exposition. Did Jesus really say that we were to use dirty money to gain God's friendship? He does not elsewhere suggest that money honestly come by would be of much service in winning God's friendship. Indeed, all his other sayings suggest the danger of wealth to the spiritual life. Is it then likely that he suggested a holy use for ill-gotten gain other than that adopted by Zacchaeus? Further, we notice that in spite of this stern attitude to wealth, Jesus nowhere plainly says that money is evil in itself. Therefore we ought not to suppose that "the mammon of unrighteousness" is simply a common phrase for money, whether lawfully or unlawfully come by. Manson says that "all money gets dirty at some stage in its history if we could only trace it out", and the only way to use this "rival to God for the service and love of man" is to convert it "from selfish to unselfish uses". It nevertheless remains true that we do distinguish between money lawfully and unlawfully gained, and the parable suggests that it is the latter we are concerned with here. That is, "the mammon of unrighteousness" means just what it says. And again we have to ask, Did Jesus really say that we were to use evil means to serve good ends? Does this verse really represent Jesus's teaching about the right use of money? We have to strain our consciences to think so.

Does the verse then belong to the parable at all, or is it an addition made by St Luke from another context? First, we notice that it is verbally connected with v. 4 by the words "that they may receive", and that the situation appears to be exactly the same as that of the parable. It is true that Jeremias thinks, on the contrary, that it is the words "that they may receive" which have attracted this verse to the parable, whereas originally it was a separate saying representing "an entirely different application from that which is given in v. 8". But Jeremias arrives at this opinion just because he interprets v. 9 in the usual way set out above. This is the chief reason that prompts exegetes to detach the verse from the parable. The common interpretation of v. 9 sees it as advice about the right use of money, whereas whatever we may think of the steward's astuteness, the parable certainly does not teach this. Plummer attempts to bring together the steward's cleverness and the fact that money is involved: "If an unrighteous steward was commended by his earthly master for his prudence in providing for his future by a fraudulent use of what had been committed to him, how much more will a righteous servant

be commended by his heavenly Master for providing for eternity by a good use of what has been committed to him." But this is surely a *tour de force*, and defies all Jülicher's canons about simplicity in the application of parables. With this interpretation the attempt to link v. 9 to the parable will always be difficult, and so it is that Creed, Dodd, Manson and Jeremias tend to take it as a separate saying. But with the connexion of language and the similarity of situation, it is very difficult to think of a more suitable context for such a striking saying, unless we suppose that Luke has in fact altered the saying to fit this context. And this is unlikely, for the whole complex suggests that he was embarrassed by something which he tried to record faithfully but which he did not really understand.

The question is bound up with vv. 10–13, for certainly these do deal with the right use of money, and equally certainly have no original connexion with the parable. Was v. 9 added at the same time as vv. 10–13, or were vv. 10–13 added because they seemed to St Luke relevant to a v. 9 which he found already part of the parable? Vv. 10–12 teach that our use of money is an indication of our spiritual state. They are added because they include the word "mammon" and because, like most later commentators, Luke thought that v. 9 dealt with the use of money. V. 13 is another money saying, but it has no connexion with the parable, no connexion with vv. 10–12 and is a direct contradiction of v. 9 if that verse deals with the right use of money. It is added because it is the only other saying of Jesus that includes the word "mammon" which we first come across in v. 9. That is to say, vv. 10–12 are attached to v. 9 by the word "mammon" and by the fact that they deal with the right use of money, and v. 13, which has no connexion with vv. 10–12, is connected with v. 9 again by the word "mammon". Surely this implies that v. 9 was already part of the parable as Luke found it, and that the subsequent sayings only were added afterwards because of the word-link and because of some supposed connexion of subject.

The conclusions so far reached may be summed up as follows:

(1) It was Jesus who commended the steward.

(2) V. 9 originally belonged to the parable; indeed, vv. 8 and 9 give Jesus's comment on the story.

(3) In this case v. 9 cannot deal with the right use of money. This interpretation contradicts Jesus's sayings about money, has no connexion with the parable, involves strained exegesis and is responsible for the complicated additions in vv. 10–13.

Can we then find another simpler way of explaining v. 9 that will take account of these points? Everything becomes much easier if we suppose that v. 9 is a piece of grim sarcasm, the tone of which was subsequently forgotten.

Many writers on the parables have pointed out that one of the categories into which they fall deals with the urgency of the crisis arising from the appearance of the Messiah on the Palestinian stage, and the necessity of prompt and decisive action in response. Elsewhere Jesus insists that the time of visitation has come upon the Jews, and that for them as a people it is indeed now or never. So

here we see the steward in a critical situation. Realizing that his whole future is involved, he takes prompt measures to insure himself. Jeremias interestingly suggests that Jesus is quoting an actual happening, and by its very surprisingness drives home his point that only promptness is appropriate to the present crisis in the Jews' history. And then, following the lines of the story, with grim humour he adds, And if now you do not want to decide for me, then I advise you to use all your money and any other means you can think of, as the steward did, and insure your eternal future elsewhere, that is, presumably, with the devil and his companions. I now stand before you with God's last word offering you a share in his kingdom. There is no way of avoiding a decision or of hoping to avoid responsibility. Therefore if you will not take what I offer, you had better make other arrangements, otherwise when heaven bursts upon you, there will be no place for you with God or anywhere else. If this was the original explanation of the saying, it is not difficult to see why the meaning of this rather shocking piece of sarcasm was quickly forgotten. But this explanation is relevant to the context and it gives the phrase "the mammon of unrighteousness" its plain sense. Moreover, we can see why, as soon as the tone of the saying was forgotten, other sayings dealing with money or attempting to explain the odd phrase "the mammon of unrighteousness" should have been added. But, in fact, the saying has nothing really to do with money. This is a parable about the importance of decision. To be faced with the call of Christ is to be faced with a decision binding one for all eternity. If one has no wish to insure one's future with Jesus, then it is worth using every crooked means to get into the devil's good books, for there are no other choices and no other chances.

GEOFFREY PAUL.

Family Worship in a Rural Parish

WYE, Kent, is a picturesque village near Ashford and 10 miles south-east of Canterbury. The population is approximately 1,600, and to this can be added a student population of some 200 during term-time, for Wye is perhaps unique in being one of the few villages in the country to possess a University College—the College of St Gregory and St Martin in the University of London and the centre of Agriculture, Horticulture Study and Research.

The parish church, once the collegiate church of the college (the college was founded by Cardinal John Kemp, Archbishop of Canterbury in 1447), has served the spiritual needs of the inhabitants of Wye for more than nine centuries. For nine centuries the Christian community of Wye has proclaimed and witnessed to the Faith. How are the Christians of our mid-twentieth century facing and tackling the same task?

Here in Wye a new approach has been made and is still in its early stages. We are all aware of the changing conditions in the structure of everyday life. Indeed, the whole pattern of the English

Sunday is changing as a result of such influences as easy transport, radio, television, etc. One is tempted to ask, "What shape is your Sunday?" Into this changing order of social habits and routine, the Church has to discover the best way to preach the gospel, instruct and teach her children, and encourage the duty and worship we owe to God. Realizing these facts we based our approach with the following factors in mind:

(*a*) The idea of the "family" worshipping together has an appeal to this present generation (we were much helped and encouraged by the Operation Firm Faith Campaign).

(*b*) The Book of Common Prayer provides the necessary framework and setting for worship and instruction in the faith.

(*c*) The importance in this age of "visual aids" in helping both the young and adults (the young in heart) in an understanding of true worship and the truths of the Christian faith.

How did we begin? In September 1955 we announced that in place of what had been a very small Sunday school there would be instead a Family Service at 9.45 a.m. on Sundays. A printed letter was sent to every house in the parish outlining our plans and hopes, and encouraging parents and children to come and worship as a family (we were prepared to accommodate prams if necessary).

The response was most encouraging and from that first Sunday morning in September we have steadily grown and developed. The pattern of worship for the first twelve months was based on the Ante-Communion from the Book of Common Prayer—it might be referred to as "Table Prayers", although our title for the purposes of the church notice-board, parish magazine, etc., has always been simply "Family Service". It consisted of the order of holy communion as far as the Nicene Creed with the ninefold Kyries in place of the decalogue, and introit and gradual hymns; the creed was followed by a hymn, an instruction, a hymn, the blessing, and either the Divine Praises or the Prayer of St Patrick (said by all).

At first only the hymns were sung. Then gradually we learnt to sing the Kyries, salutations and responses, and the Creed to the setting of John Merbecke. The children especially delighted in learning this music, and it was proof that Merbecke wrote his music for congregational use; even the young could manage it. The teaching value of such a pattern of worship is immense. It is liturgical in form, it is based on the Prayer Book, it means that the congregation is acquainted with the Collect, Epistle and Gospel for each Sunday in the year, a short instruction is given after the Creed, and the hymns, if carefully selected, can teach the particular theme of the Church's message for Sunday or season.

The equipment and personal details are as follows: *The Church and School Hymnal* as the hymn book, Phyllis Graham's *The Children's Worship* for the young children, and *The Communion Service with music notation by Merbecke* (S.P.C.K.) for older children and adults. The members of the congregation are encouraged to have their own copies of the Prayer Book and so to follow the Collect, Epistle and Gospel. The children are given an attendance stamp

and album, usually of a series based on the Gospel, Epistle, or the subject of the instruction.

A layman acts as "commentator", announcing the hymns and giving the relevant page numbers in the service books. There is a robed choir of boys and girls (twelve in number). The newly confirmed—that is, the young communicants—help as stewards, sidesmen, keeping the register of attendance, and dealing with the stamps and albums, etc. Two of the boys have been trained as servers. The liaison between priest, commentator and organist is important, and this is aided by sending a printed copy of the outline of the service to commentator and organist on the preceding Monday or Tuesday.

The instruction by the vicar follows a syllabus based on the Church Catechism, and such text-books as J. R. Lumb's *Courses on the Catechism* or the *Church Teaching for the Junior Child* (e.g. Book IV) can be adapted. The aim has been a short instruction (not more than ten minutes), making and teaching one point only at a time and using some visual aid, if possible, to help the congregation to retain the lesson. ("One in the eye" is worth "three in the ear", especially in this age of T.V. viewing and pictures.) I have found a blackboard and chalk most valuable during the instruction. In most cases a prepared drawing using coloured chalk is most effective if displayed at the end or summing up of a short lesson or instruction. If a touch of humour can be introduced, the drawing and the moral are sure to be remembered long afterwards by the congregation. (It was a method used by H. A. Wilson in *Haggerston Catechism.*) I have found that even the adults appreciate this visual aid, and they have often approached me with the fear in their minds that I might one day abandon the blackboard drawing. It is an ancient and tested visual aid, as proved by the existence of wall paintings in numerous ancient parish churches. They were obviously used as teaching aids before the printed Bible.

After our first twelve months we were able, with careful instruction and learning of the music, to have a fully sung *family* Eucharist or communion twice a month and on the greater Festivals (continuing with Table Prayers on the other Sundays). This, of course, was our aim from the beginning—to provide the Lord's own service, for the Lord's own people, on the Lord's own day; to enable parents and all communicants to receive holy communion frequently and regularly; to train the children into the service in which one day, after confirmation, they would enjoy the full privileges of church membership at the family table. We hope that we are resolving the problem of the boy or girl who lapses from the church either at Sunday school leaving age or after confirmation, by teaching the Christian Faith and by helping them to take, quite naturally, their part in the worship of the Christian family. The service takes place in the north aisle of the church, where there is an altar near enough to the congregation to assure a close link between priest and people. Simple eucharistic vestments are worn by the celebrant. The congregation stands for the Sursum Corda, Sanctus and Benedictus—also for the Lord's Prayer and Prayer of Thanksgiv-

ing. (This is possibly a return to primitive custom?) By popular vote the congregation now prefers to sing Martin Shaw's setting of the Creed (*An Anglican Folk Mass*) rather than the Merbecke—the children find the melody easier to remember and sing. The rest of the service is sung to Merbecke.

What has been the result after two and a half years? A new congregation has been built up (mainly from a new and small housing estate near to the church) which now outnumbers the congregation at the 8 a.m. Celebration, Mattins or Evensong. There is a steady average attendance of 60 to 70 each Sunday, and on festivals it often exceeds the 100 mark. Weather conditions do affect the size of any congregation, but even during the most adverse conditions we have never dropped below 50. These numbers are fairly constant and a steady rise is indicated. Two and a half years ago the number of children attending Sunday school was less than two dozen.

From this Family Service has come a Young Communicants' Club (a parish youth club) that meets weekly and keeps its program of activity within the five aims of worship, witness, study, service and recreation. Also a Parents' Association has been formed, and once a quarter parents are invited to meet together for discussion and talks at the vicarage. Parents love to talk about their youngsters and want to do the right thing for them.

Parish records show a rise in the number of communicants from 1,533 in 1955 to a total of 2,605 in 1957. The increase is due to the Family Eucharist—there has been no appreciable rise in the number of communicants at the 8 a.m. Celebration or other Celebrations.

Advantage has been taken to advertise "The Family Service" by means of posters on the church notice-boards and by smaller advertisements and articles in the parish magazine. But the regular Sunday morning parade of parents and children, the teen-agers and the "young in heart", to church and home again has proved the biggest piece of witness to the village. The inhabitants of Wye have become aware of the fact that "something happens" at the parish church every Sunday at 9.45 a.m.

One other development in the parish life in Wye has been the revival of the four Agricultural Festivals—Plough Sunday, Rogation Procession, Lammas and Harvest Thanksgiving. Together, they embrace the complete cycle of husbandry: ploughing and sowing, the young corn, the first fruits and the ingathering. The observance of the first three of these ceremonies had lapsed long ago—within living memory at least. Their revival has evoked a good response and a new interest, especially in a very rural parish that houses an Agricultural College. On Plough Sunday a plough is brought into church and placed in the chancel, and churchwardens and ploughmen gather round it as the vicar in a simple ceremony invokes a blessing on all ploughing on the parish farmland.

On Rogation Sunday a procession goes out from the church to bless the gardens, the crops on the farms, the cattle, the farm houses, the allotments, and all who work in the agricultural industry. At Lammas (Loaf-Mass) a first cutting of corn and a newly baked loaf

(baked from the finest flour by the local baker) is presented in church and placed on the altar. This year it is planned to do this at a parish Eucharist, when the Family Service and Mattins congregation will join together in one act of worship. The loaf thus offered at the altar will be used as the communion bread, and thus the deep significance of the offering of bread and wine at the offertory—the product of man's labour and the fruits of the earth as the outward sign of the sacrament—will be realized in a more visible way.

Harvest Thanksgiving is the culmination of the year's work on the land. At Evensong a procession of token gifts of the harvest is made by representatives of various groups in the parish—by fathers, mothers, youth, children, churchwardens and servers—and these gifts are placed on the altar with an appropriate bidding to prayer.

These four festivals, with their simple ceremonies, bring home the joy and colour and movement of the Christian Faith and its links with the rhythm of the earth.

A. E. Pearce.

OUR CONTRIBUTORS

Mr Thompson is a Lecturer in the Psychology Department at Canterbury University College, Christchurch, New Zealand.

Dr Buchanan is the Education Officer at St Katharine's Foundation, London, E.14.

The Rev. Geoffrey Paul is on the staff of the Kerala United Theology Seminary in South India.

The Rev. A. E. Pearce is Vicar of Wye.

CORRESPONDENCE

INTEGRITY IN APOLOGETICS

To the Editor of Theology.

Sir,

Mr Wren-Lewis renders a needful service "in calling the bluff" of much contemporary Christian apologetic. For what good indeed such apologetic achieves is hard to see. That it fails to move those to whom it is ostensibly addressed is certain, whilst its smugness and intellectual dishonesty—the word is not too strong—can scarcely be to the spiritual advantage of its proponents and sympathizers. The truth is that to-day belief in the Christian creed is more difficult than it has been at any time since the era of its origin, because never before was there so powerful a convergence of forces to make it appear incredible if not meaningless. Little wonder is it, then, that the Common Man of this mid-twentieth century has in fact few or no identifiable religious convictions. He is not as a rule very articulate about his scepticism; and he doubtless would find it

difficult to say just why he can't believe in what he was taught at Sunday school. But the belief is not there, and he knows it. Moreover, he suspects that those who do claim to have it—apart from the odd crank whose credulity is no testimony to his intelligence—are really in no different case from himself, and only profess it from interested motives of one sort or another.

Yet strangely enough this problem of *belief*, which in importance dwarfs all others, save that of sheer moral delinquency, that the Church has to face, is the very one about which it seems the least seriously concerned. Dr Kathleen Bliss remarks, pertinently, that the question "Can the faith survive?" is not merely rhetorical. It would not be absurd to ask "Has the faith survived?" Why is it that, once, quite unlettered people could think theologically, whereas in this age even the educated are commonly at a loss to know what positive significance Christian doctrine can be thought to have. Yet if this is really the condition of things in respect of the great bulk of the population, what hope can Church leaders entertain that ecclesiastical activities will ever command the attention of more than a small, and that perhaps a diminishing, minority?

I am sure that Mr Wren-Lewis is right in stating that "the real root of the apologist's convictions is an experience which he cannot seriously bring himself to deny", and that his primary purpose is to "witness to a known truth" rather than attempt to prove an hypothesis. Faith is an insight, an apprehension of realities, not a calculation of probabilities; an assurance, not a conjecture. So long as religious belief is represented as, at the rational level, an acceptance of statements for which evidence is lacking, or is of dubious interpretation, unbelievers will constitute the vast majority and include many of the best minds—the most serious and sincere, as well as the most acute. And so long as the apologist turns for credit to intellectual positions which are both disputable in themselves and offer, at the most, only ambiguous support to the Christian doctrines in whose aid they are invoked; or so long, on the other hand, as he insists that those doctrines are essentially "mysterious", defying rational comprehension, or else dogmas imparted by a supernatural authority the basis of which is beyond investigation, such minds will remain alienated. If our principle is *credo quia impossible est* we certainly should have no right to regard unbelief as in any way morally culpable.

But true unbelief is morally culpable. It is a refusal of authenticity, a deliberate preference of the sham and the lie. The nineteenth-century liberal theologians, whom it has been for too long our fancy to despise, realized this. Their motto, consciously adopted or not, was Schleiermacher's *Ihr könnt ihm nicht glauben willkürlich, sondern weil ihr müsst*—"You cannot believe in God arbitrarily, but only because you must". Truth is self-authenticating. You don't have to talk yourself into it. A faith that has to be *argued*, by appeal to the sanction of something—miracle, "authority", the disadvantages of *un*faith, or what you will—*other than* its proper object is not really faith at all. It is only an arbitrary adjustment of the mind to

consider the likelihood of certain contingencies. That the content of belief will change, more or less, from age to age I do not deny: what our forebears were evidently willing to die for we may now look on as no better than a doubtful supposition, if not a mere figment. Such relativity is indeed the pathos of the human condition. But what men do in truth believe they will die for, since for them faith is of the essence of life itself.

It must therefore be admitted that, as Dr Bliss says, a good deal, if not most, of what goes by the name of theology to-day is actually no more than the study of an aspect of human, and in particular European, civilization. It belongs, as an historical discipline, to the vocational equipment with which ministers of religion are expected to be supplied. To this even "Biblical Theology" provides no exception. Effective theological thinking, however, must work on what recognizably is "given", viz. the experience of life as now lived. It must seek to discover *within* the conditions of that experience the presence and operation of a Reality which—whilst, hypothetically, transcending all that we are or can be—is yet, practically, the most intimate, the most immediate and inescapable fact of which we have knowledge. The traditional Christian dogmatic symbolism will still avail us in this quest—but only as a starting-point. And we may not, since the test of faith is always empirical, anticipate the goal.

Yours faithfully,
B. M. G. Reardon.

Kelly Rectory,
Lifton, Devon.

To the Editor of Theology.

Dear Sir,

May I put in a plea for those who, not blessed with the gift of real faith, still cling to "an emotionally toned fantasy-system" (Theology, March 1958, p. 111) to make their lives meaningful? Not every fantasy which gives men something to live for is to be welcomed; yet this does not mean that every attempt to provide the world with a mythological formula and its liturgical expression is to be rejected as the work of paranoiacs.

Could it not be, for example, that the Creeds are a trans-subjective representation of the creative and redemptive experiences of "new life in the relationships of the Christian community"? Mythology, then, is a means of giving insight into those relationships, so that the Creeds, like sacraments, effect what they signify, and Christians are enabled to alternate between participation in the Eucharist and sharing in the citizenship of the technological State.

Yours sincerely,
Philip Wright.

24 Bede Road,
Barnard Castle.

THE LIFE AND DEATH OF SYMBOLS

To the Editor of THEOLOGY.

DEAR SIR,

Mr Lory says that my statement that "the leading ideas (of any particular age) are the 'truths' which artists have been concerned to communicate" is a partial truth. Within the compass of a short article, I could not enlarge upon this, and I am grateful to him for pointing out its ambiguity. In fact, by the leading ideas of any particular age I meant those ideas which are concerned with the order which underlies or transcends both phenomenal and noumenal reality, man's place in that order, and the nature of its governance. Thus, when a society believes that that order derives from God or the gods, its art will be religious; when it assumes that Man is Master of his own Fate, its art will be humanist; and so on. Mr Lory is right when he says that all art is ultimately concerned with God's truth, for, in all ages, it is the apprehension of God's transcendent order that inspires the artist. Whether he attributes its governance to ancestral spirits (as in some Negro societies), or to blood-hungry gods (as in Aztec society), or to mechanistic law (as in much of our own society), it is still God's order which he apprehends. What Mr Lory calls "the beauty which endures" is simply the truth of the artist's apprehension, however much he may have misinterpreted the nature of that which he has apprehended. But when Mr Lory says that "the basis of a good painting is good design", he is in danger of confusing a means with the end. The artist's end must always be to embody and express in and by his ordered design his apprehension of the transcendent order of things; and this he will normally do in terms of the nature attributed to it by his own society and age, whether he be deaf like Beethoven or blind like Milton. But if his end is *merely* to design, his work will be vacuous and insignificant.

Yours faithfully,
ANTONY BRIDGE.

SECT OR CHURCH?

To the Editor of THEOLOGY.

SIR,

I am sorry if my article in January misinterpreted *Pastoral Theology: A Reorientation* by suggesting that in effect it argued for the substitution of a sect in place of the National Church. It was possibly unwise to use the terminology made familiar by Ernst Troeltsch, and I will make Mr Thornton a present of an article criticizing Troeltsch contributed by Franklin Littell to the *Ecumenical Review* for April 1954. ("Whatever group makes anything other than Jesus Christ central to discipline and order is a 'sect'.") Perhaps it would be clearer to say simply that while I am conscious of a debt

to Fenton Hort and Mandell Creighton, Mr Thornton appears to me to march with John Bunyan and Charles Gore (cf. Prestige's Life, Ch. XXI).

But, in general, I am inclined to be as intemperate as I was in January!

(1) It is a reasonable thesis that in assessing the conflicting claims on his time a parish priest should give preference to training intensively a nucleus of the faithful. (One longs for the hundred companies of Canon Lloyd's Servants of Christ the King to become a thousand.) But it is not legitimate to glorify this nucleus with the biblical designation "remnant" interpreted in an entirely unbiblical way and with appallingly unbiblical consequences.

(2) Mr Thornton replies to me in your April number that he should not be blamed for omitting preaching among the obligations of priesthood: he had "nothing original to add", and the book was already long enough. My point was that to expound pastoral work solely in terms of spiritual direction was to ignore all that we have learnt from the biblical and liturgical movements in Catholicism and Protestantism alike these twenty years. Mr Thornton's admiration for the Order of St Benedict could well go farther.

(3) Mr Thornton is "unashamed" to regard the adoration of God, conceived as accomplished in Eucharist and Office, as the "top priority" for the Christian people, and once (p. 109) he deplores the wider view of the Church's life associated with F. D. Maurice. But does not Scripture imply that the worship of God itself properly extends to the right ordering of family and national life and that personal holiness is as much living for others as prayerfulness? Mr Thornton's priest and faithful are too much removed. What he calls "the empty piety of family prayers" (p. 111) may well accord better with apostolic precept than an office in church, of which "it does not matter so very much if it is in Greek, Latin or Double Dutch so long as it is authoritative, definite, invariable and objectively giveable" (p. 217).

(4) It is irresponsible for an ordained teacher to insinuate apocryphal embroiderings into a straightforward N.T. narrative, as on p. 30: "The Nativity . . . St Mary and St Joseph, followed by a few shepherds, seers, and three local lords of the manor, all assembled in an underground stable."

(5) Two of several unhappy practical corollaries of this plea for a "remnant" whose "condescending" (p. 48) concern for the multitude is fulfilled by intercession and prayerful example, without mission, are the Pelagian contempt for the worshipper who thanked the vicar for a "helpful service" (p. 215), and the proposal for more bishops with smaller dioceses (p. 19) (as Mr Frank Bennett also advocated in a witty article in this journal for February 1946. Has Canon Frank Bennett repented?), but also necessarily with less influence in public affairs and probably scanty equipment to guide the presbyters.

Can this be the reformers' blue-print: episcopal nonentities, paralysed preachers, and remnants of irrelevant numerical composition who utter pious gibberish duly authorized by the local apology for a

prelate? Of course it is not: yet every item might be deduced, with little exaggeration, from this widely circulating book.

I am,
Yours faithfully,
W. R. F. Browning.

Great Haseley Rectory,
Oxford.

INTINCTION

To the Editor of Theology.

Dear Sir,

Perhaps the advocates of intinction will forgive a rather shame-faced warning from a dissenter. In my view, there is no single factor which has contributed so much to the sacramental poverty of our churches as the widespread adoption of that ugliest and most deplorable church furnisher's brainchild, the individual communion cup. It is rare indeed for us to participate in the venerable Puritan practice, whereby the congregation forms a circle and passes the cup from hand to hand, each person turning to face his neighbour as he drinks. Messrs Stead and Dupré have said all that needs to be said about the significance of the Anglican method: may they never have the misfortune of losing what many of us would give much to recover.

Yours faithfully,
C. P. Driver.

Barrow Hill,
Chesterfield.

To the Editor of Theology.

Dear Sir,

In this district there is a small hospital devoted to the treatment and cure of Hansen's disease, popularly known as leprosy. Among the minority of patients who are both European and Anglican there is a woman from a part of the West Indies where the malady is not uncommon among non-Europeans. She was previously a faithful communicant at a church where Christians of many races and domestic backgrounds share the Eucharistic Cup. She is still a faithful communicant, but cannot get it out of her head that she may have become infected in this way.

What is she to be told? That such infection is impossible? Neither medicine nor theology support such a view. That leprosy may be her share of the Koinonia, invoked in the conservative interest by Mr Dupré? That, following Mr Stead's line of thought, her uncertainty symbolizes some mystery of the incarnate life? There may be a little truth in the last two suggestions, though hardly of a kind to be of much use to this lady, nor to parochial clergy and other worshippers who are disturbed by the difference between elementary hygiene and Anglican practice.

The relevance of this case lies not in the nature of the disease, which before the power of medicine and the Spirit is losing something of its former horror, but in its presumed identity with a disease specifically mentioned in the New Testament in evidence of Christ's healing power. Even the improbable possibility of leprosy being conveyed in the Holy Eucharist, unnecessarily, suggests that the traditional manner of its administration among Anglicans ought to be changed. The stable may not have been clean, but it was the cleanest place available.

Even if exegesis entitled us to claim our practice to be in precise conformity with the divine institution, we would be unwise to be preoccupied with the symbolism, and imitation, of secondary details (leavened/unleavened bread, beginning/end of the day, holy table/altar, etc.), instead of so faithfully using the gift that the simple ones of our own generation may behold what it symbolizes, and be edified.

In any case, our Lord's acceptance of the hygienic standards of his day, among a handful of close friends, cannot any more than his acceptance of contemporary standards of biblical criticism justify us in rejecting other standards since revealed by the Spirit, especially in the very different conditions of a well-attended parish communion.

The Lambeth resolution authorizing Intinction, where conditions require it, is to be the more welcomed as it becomes more evident that present-day conditions require it everywhere the Cup of Blessing is to be tasted.

Yours sincerely,
P. S. Lewis.

Christ Church Parsonage,
Salfords,
Redhill.

[This correspondence is now closed.—Ed. Theology.]

BOOK REVIEWS

The Mystical Theology of the Eastern Church. By Vladimir Lossky. James Clarke and Co. 16s.

This is a most important book, and much gratitude is due to the translators whose skill and diligence has made it available to the English-speaking public thirteen years after its original appearance in French. In spite of its title, it is not just a treatise on the mystical theology of the Eastern Church in the sense in which, for example, Mgr Farges' *Mystical Phenomena* is a treatise on the mystical theology of the Roman Church. It is, in fact, a systematic exposition of the dogmatic theology of the Eastern Orthodox Church in so far as it bears upon the spiritual life. And, while descriptive works on Eastern Orthodoxy are plentiful, works of this kind in English are very rare indeed. Almost the only example is provided by the late Frank Gavin's *Some Aspects of Contemporary Greek Orthodox Thought*, and that, while accurate and informative, is hardly an inspiring work, nor does it make any attempt to get beneath the surface levels of Orthodox theology. Prof. Lossky's book, on the other

hand, is quite invaluable in bringing us face to face with the profound and subcutaneous theological differences which underlie the divergent practices of East and West.

While a Western Catholic theologian will explain the obscurity of our knowledge of God in terms of his infinite and transcendent *knowability*, a knowability which outstrips the capacity of our finite intellects, Prof. Lossky, whole-heartedly committing himself to the pseudo-Areopagite, insists that God is fundamentally unknowable. A Western Catholic, on reading Prof. Lossky's chapter on the Divine Darkness, will be inclined to accuse its author of forgetting altogether the Christian doctrine of creation and will wish to retort that the very finitude of the creature gives it a point of contact with God which can provide the basis for a genuine, even if obscure and partial, apprehension of him, since its very existence depends upon his incessant communication to it of its very being. Lossky, he will say, so radically separates the creature from God that its existence becomes entirely unintelligible; Barth himself has nothing on Lossky here. Nevertheless, Lossky tells us, although God cannot be known by man, man can be deified by union with God; and there is nothing Barthian about this. "Unknowability does not mean agnosticism or refusal to know God. Nevertheless, this knowledge will only be attained in the way which leads not to knowledge but to union—to deification" (p. 43). (We may remember that so out-and-out a Western as Fr Victor White, in his *God the Unknown*, pushes to an extreme St Thomas's teaching that in this life we know about God only *that he is* and *what he is not*, making this principle include not only natural but also revealed knowledge of God.) In any case, in a subsequent chapter the balance of this initial apophaticism is redressed. Introducing a distinction between the essence of God and his energies, which is totally foreign to Western theology but can be found in germ in the pseudo-Areopagite and was developed and systematized by the fourteenth-century Archbishop of Thessalonica Gregory Palamas, Lossky assures us that God, while being radically incommunicable in his *essence*, is self-communicable in his *energies* and thus expresses himself both in creation and in his revelation to man. For the way in which this doctrine is worked out in detail and is applied to the spiritual life the reader must be referred to Lossky's book; he will find in it much that is familiar and also much that is strange and even shocking. Here I can only touch upon a few of the more striking issues.

First, it must be noticed that, however great the difference may be between the typically Western Catholic doctrine of the analogy of being and the Palamite doctrine of essence and energies, it is at least doubtful whether this divergence goes down to the dogmatic level. Lossky is, for example, emphatic that creation is due simply to God's decision to make a world and that God is under no necessity, either physical or moral, to do this; any kind of pantheist or emanationist view is explicitly excluded. Nevertheless, Lossky clearly believes that the differences between East and West both in the realm of doctrine and of spirituality arise from this fundamental difference in religious

metaphysics. Both the Filioque and the Dark Night of the Soul are seen by him as aberrations, the one of doctrine, the other of spirituality, arising from the Western Church's failure to assimilate the truth about the divine energies. So, too, are the Western formulations of the relation between nature and supernature and the notion of the created supernatural. Now what I find myself asking—and this is a question that only sympathetic and persistent discussion can solve—is whether Lossky is right about this, and whether in any case the differences are strictly speaking *theological* ones. Most Western theologians would say that the Dark Night, in the typical form in which we find it in the great Carmelite mystics, is a Carmelite, or at any rate a monastic, phenomenon, while they would add that analogical parallels to it seem to be common to the life of prayer in general. They will also notice that, whatever Lossky and other Orthodox may say, something very like the Dark Night is observable in the experience and teaching of the Orthodox saints themselves. Again, while the notion of the created supernatural may well seem clumsy and paradoxical to an Eastern, the Palamite account of deification may well seem pantheistic to a Western. The truth of the matter is that both Eastern and Western are trying to rationalize and systematize a highly mysterious and paradoxical fact: that it is possible for a creature to be deified, that a creature, while remaining a creature, can be made a partaker of the nature of God. If each side seems to the other to be talking something very like nonsense, need we be very much surprised? In any case, I think that a good many Westerns would be much readier to speak of supernaturalized creaturehood than of the created supernatural. And may it not perhaps turn out in the end that the notion of the energies does for the Eastern very much what the notion of the supernatural does for the Western, and that this is why each party finds the other's notion superfluous? I suggest that if Eastern and Western theologians when they meet would discuss questions like these instead of the number of the sacraments or the validity of orders they would be tackling the problem of reunion at its root.

Again, I find myself inquiring how far the doctrines which Lossky expounds so eloquently and lucidly are essentials of orthodox dogma and how far they are merely theologumena and therefore optional. Lossky certainly gives the impression that they belong to the dogmatic realm, though I do not think that, with the exception of the Filioque, he ever brands their rejection as heretical. If, on the other hand, they are only theologumena, even if theologumena of extreme venerability, it should be possible to discuss without any prejudice or animus the comparative adequacy of the Eastern and Western formulations as systematizations of the fundamental dogmatic and spiritual facts. Here, too, there is an opportunity for fruitful investigation and discussion.

Lastly, the one thing that is indisputably clear from Lossky's book is that there is no justification whatever for the common assumption that on the basic issues of the Christian religion Eastern Orthodoxy and traditional Protestantism line up together against the Church of

Rome. All the characteristics of Western Catholicism against which Protestants such as Barth, Brunner and Nygren inveigh so energetically—its doctrine of deification, its mysticism, its contamination by the neo-Platonism of the pseudo-Areopagite, its command that a man should love God—all these appear in a far more extreme form in the spirituality of the Eastern Church, while, on the other hand, the Easterns see in Protestantism only the logical outcome of the rationalism and (as it appears to them) the anti-mysticism of Rome.

Like any other book which gets beneath the level of superficialities and platitudes, this is both inspiring and disturbing. For it both reveals how deep-seated our differences really are and shows us precisely where they need to be attacked. Furthermore, Prof. Lossky combines a deep attachment to the authentic Orthodox tradition with an almost Gallic lucidity, in contrast to some other Orthodox writers who serve up under the label of Orthodoxy complicated concoctions of German idealism with theosophical trimmings. If it is taken as seriously as it deserves to be his work will make a contribution of inestimable value to the reunion movement and to the life of Christian devotion.

The anonymous translators are to be congratulated for a rendering which is both readable and accurate. There are a number of trivial misprints and two mistranslations. On p. 8 in line 23 "aiming at" should read "attacking", and on p. 86, line 12, should read "able to see in a glass our faces, themselves remaining invisible".

E. L. Mascall.

Christ Church,
Oxford.

Revelation and Existence: a study in the theology of Rudolf Bultmann. By H. P. Owen. University of Wales Press. 15s.

Mr Owen is to be congratulated on this work. It combines clear argument and fresh insight with a real attempt to shift the discussion about Bultmann out of the barren position in which, in this country at least, it has threatened to get stuck. Mr Owen is highly critical of Bultmann at several points, but in a way which makes sense, so that the reader is able to glimpse the tremendous theological issues. The work begun in English by Prof. Ian Henderson's *Myth in the New Testament*, and continued by Dr John Macquarrie's *An Existentialist Theology*, has received in Mr Owen's book a real impetus.

In analysing Bultmann's thought, Mr Owen's main interest is in the demythologizing controversy, but he draws for his exposition on the whole range of Bultmann's thought. In some respects he is able to present this thought more pungently and coherently than Bultmann himself. At the same time, this very clarity is attained at the expense of the richness and variety of Bultmann's thought.

In brief, Mr Owen argues that Bultmann's main concern is with the being of God rather than with ways of knowing him. Bultmann

does not object to symbols as such, but only to symbols which misinterpret that being. But though we may call his interest ontological rather than epistemological, the ontology is in its turn strictly confined by the nature of the Christian revelation: it is an ontology which may be discerned only in action. It is God's act in Christ which is the central concern for Bultmann.

This act is personal; or, more precisely, inter-personal, or intersubjective. Myth violates this norm in introducing a misleading objectivity. This personal or subjective or existential act possesses four characteristics: it is simultaneously transcendent and concealed; it takes the form of "encounter"; it gives man self-understanding; and it is not dependent upon objective evidence.

In developing the significance of these four criteria, Mr Owen argues with great vivacity and persuasive power that while we may accept the description of God's act as personal or subjective, transcendent and concealed, leading to a new self-understanding of man, we cannot accept the notion of "encounter" as adequate. This would involve, argues Mr Owen, an impossible reduction of God's act to the present, to the moment of proclamation and decision. The doctrine of the immanent God, the doctrine of the Holy Spirit, the doctrine of the Church, would all disappear.

It is clearly impossible to do more here than raise a few questions.

1. Mr Owen rightly focuses attention upon the distinction Bultmann makes between *Historie* (scientific and detached examination of historical "facts") and *Geschichte* (history for me now in its "significance", its eschatological question or "address" to me). He frames Bultmann's problem, however, in this question: "How is it possible to preserve the unique significance of this past event, while insisting that God always acts through an encounter in the present?" In claiming that Bultmann answers this question entirely in terms of *Geschichte* (interpreted by Mr Owen as encounter in the present) it is of course easy to say that Bultmann is abandoning historical research and Christ as the Incarnation of the divine being. Further, it is asserted, Bultmann is simply exchanging the objective Word and the objective Incarnation for "their subjective correlates". Mr Owen's own description of the reality of God's act in Christ is that it is "both temporal and eternal . . . the point at which eternity crosses time". My question here is whether Mr Owen is not falling back upon concealed metaphysical assumptions which need the same cool examination as he gives to Bultmann's thought.

2. The whole question of the subject-object dichotomy clearly needs further examination. My question here is whether we may fairly identify Bultmann's "subjectivism" with merely the one pole of a subject-object schema. If "subjective" did mean simply an inner psychological state, then certainly Bultmann's earlier critics would be right, e.g. Karl Barth, who claims that Bultmann reduces the kerygma to statements about man's inner life. The force of Bultmann's argument is directed towards overcoming the classic subject-object way of looking at the world, and at God's act in Christ. It is certainly a pity that no better word than "subjective" can be found—

though of course Bultmann throughout uses this word in the Kierkegaardian sense of the real personal being of man.

3. My third question can only be put in general terms: if Christ is indeed that *novum* in history which Bultmann claims, which all Christians recognize, is it not possible that Bultmann's effort to reinterpret all doctrine may be leading us to the threshold of a new statement of Christian truth? I cannot help feeling that Mr Owen may help us further—if he will submit his own counter-propositions and language (such as the use of "eternal", "supernatural", "co-substantial", "immanent") to the same forceful scrutiny as he has wielded upon Bultmann's language.

In any case, Mr Owen's work is a very welcome contribution, perhaps a landmark, in a discussion which certainly cannot be evaded.

Ronald Gregor Smith.

Glasgow University.

Battle for the Mind: a physiology of conversion and brain-washing. By William Sargant. Windmill Press. 25s.

The purpose of this book is to make clear the neuro-physiology of thought-changing as practised in "brain-washing" and in religious propaganda, and to show how this may be understood in the light of Pavlov's latest work on the effects of mental stress on the conditioned reflexes of dogs. It is lavishly illustrated with pictures of religious gatherings, of evangelists working on converts at the point of breakdown, of Voodoo ceremonies, and of the handling of snakes in North Carolina. These pictures are not all of equal relevance to the thesis of the book. Snake handling, for example, was not used as a means of obtaining religious conversions. The same people handled snakes Sunday after Sunday and developed the same trance-like conditions.

The part of Pavlov's work which is suggested by the author as bearing on these probems is that in which, after having produced acquired reflexes (such as that of salivating at the sound of a bell after the bell had several times been sounded at the time of the dog being fed), the dog was subjected to stress: e.g. by increased intensity of signal, long pause before feeding, or irregularity of coincidence between feeding and the sound of the bell. In such cases, the dog showed various degrees of irregularity of response, due, as Pavlov taught, to inhibitory mechanisms which served a protective purpose. These were: first, equal intensity of response to all intensities of stimulation (as a tired man may be as pleased at finding sixpence as at finding a hundred pounds); secondly, a paradoxical phase when weaker stimuli produce a stronger response; and, finally, an ultra-paradoxical phase when stimuli previously producing negative responses start producing positive ones and vice versa. Thus in the ultra-paradoxical phase, the dog may follow a hated individual and attack a well-loved one.

The author says (p. 12): "The possible relevance of these experiments to sudden religious and political conversion should be obvious

even to the most sceptical." This phrase "should be obvious" seems to cover a considerable leap in thought. Like a dog in the ultra-paradoxical phase, a religious convert may start singing psalms which he previously hated and avoiding alcoholic liquors which he previously loved. But is this to say more than that his behaviour patterns have been changed, which was a recognized characteristic of religious conversion long before Pavlov studied the conditioned reflexes of dogs? Apart from this change, the two cases are not closely parallel. There may be verbally induced stresses connected with fear of Hell which are produced by the preacher as preludes to conversion, but these may not be used. And a general ultra-paradoxical condition is not characteristic of religious conversion; only changed attitudes with respect to religious practices and previously indulged sinful practices.

The problem remains. If certain situations produce changes in the nervous system such as to induce changes of opinions as a mere result of those neuro-physiological changes, to what extent is the deliberate use of such situations a permissible method of religious propaganda? The question remains the same whether we regard the changes as obeying the laws of suggestion or of Pavlov's ultra-paradoxical inhibitory mechanisms. This book will be of value if it leads its readers to ask this question; I doubt whether it will prove of much value as a help to answering it.

R. H. Thouless.

Corpus Christi College,
Cambridge.

Anglo-Russian Theological Conference, Moscow, July 1956. A Report of a Theological Conference held between Members of a Delegation from the Russian Orthodox Church and a Delegation from the Church of England. Edited by H. M. Waddams. Faith Press. 15s.

The visit of an Anglican delegation, headed by the Archbishop of York, to the Russian Church in July 1956 received considerable publicity at the time. This little volume makes abundantly clear that the visit had a much deeper purpose than the mere exchange of courtesies and, although, as the Archbishop of York says in his Preface, the conference was "but one factor in a busy fortnight's visit to the Russian Church", it was surely the most important.

This is the first time that delegations from the Anglican and Russian Churches have met in formal theological conference. That is, perhaps, the most significant thing about it. The conference program followed a line already familiar to those who know the history of previous Anglo-Orthodox meetings of this kind. The minutes of the theological discussions in this volume, however, are much fuller and better reported than has been the case in previous reports. These minutes are clearly presented, and are of the highest interest and importance. So clear are they, that only once is one seriously hampered by the fact that the papers of the Anglican delegates are

not printed; the discussion on the Rev. H. A. Williams's paper on the Sacraments means little without his text.

The subjects treated are the familiar ones: Scripture and Tradition; the Nature of Dogma; Creeds and Councils; the *Filioque* Clause; the Nature and Number of the Sacraments and the Rites and Customs of the Church. It is my impression, however, that on the Anglican side they are treated with a great deal more theological insight, and at a much deeper level, than has often been the case. Particularly striking, of course, is the overall theological wisdom of the Archbishop of York. Hardly less striking are the valuable contributions made by the Principal of Wycliffe Hall who, as he said, "had never lived in an Orthodox country or come face to face with the Orthodox in this way".

Certain factors emerge from the reading of this Report:

1. A language barrier is a serious handicap in a discussion of this kind; the discussions reveal several misunderstandings due to mistranslation. I suppose the average Anglican likely to participate in such talks in the future cannot be expected to know Russian, but presumably he will know Greek, and it may be that our future discussions with the Orthodox should be conducted in that language. (Incidentally, on the subject of language, the suggestion made that Anglicans might apply the word *musterion* to the "five commonly called sacraments", and thus avoid the shock which the Orthodox feel when they find that we do not normally apply the word "sacrament" to them, is full of interest and worthy of further consideration.)

2. We need, on both sides, more understanding of the radical difference between the Orthodox and Anglican historical traditions. The Archbishop of York made this abundantly clear.

3. Unfortunately very few, except those professionally concerned, read these reports. This is always a pity, however tedious many of them are. It is doubly a pity in this case and the tedium has been admirably avoided. But, more important, definite statements were made on behalf of Anglicanism, *vis-à-vis* Orthodoxy, which will create a precedent for future discussion, and were made by responsible theologians. Anglicans should know what they were.

Within the rather narrow limits of space, Canon Waddams's editing is impeccable, and how refreshing it is that, in the midst of a necessarily rather solemn discussion he preserves the Archbishop of York's human touch: "At 12 we will have a very short interval for drinks."

Henry R. T. Brandreth, O.G.S.

Paris.

The Church's Understanding of Itself. By R. H. T. Thompson. S.C.M. Press. 8s. 6d.

As one of the four Birmingham parish priests invited to co-operate in a fact-finding survey in the early summer of 1955, I am naturally most interested in the publication of Mr Thompson's book.

For this survey, Mr Thompson, a university lecturer from New

Zealand, chose four parishes of different churchmanship and social pattern, covering the centre and outer circumference of the City of Birmingham. The book is a thoughtful attempt to probe into the intricate and difficult problems which face any parish priest working among the great masses of population in our larger cities and towns. He aims to come to a more adequate understanding of "the deeper, underlying, general causes which bring about the unresponsiveness of the contemporary mind to the Christian message" and to examine "the incapacities of the great Christian verities—even when they are listened to—to come alive", and to base his findings upon "relevant and reliable information". All this is quite admirable, and we should hope to obtain findings backed up by carefully sifted and documented evidence—but what do we find?

Throughout the book, and particularly in chapter 9, the impression is conveyed that the small down-town Anglo-Catholic parish is the only parish of the four surveyed where we find the vicar fulfilling his function as teacher, priest and pastor; and the congregation responding by being the Body of Christ in worship, fellowship and service.

By contrast, the other three parishes are all assessed together as providing no definite teaching, strategy or fellowship. Here, the Church is "powerless to influence its environment or to judge, redeem and transform social facts and movements". The appeal rests "upon social compatibility rather than doctrinal conviction" and the Church is not seen as a fellowship "by the majority of its members, nor as involving obligations". How does this square with the replies received to the questionary from each parish in which the majority of its members state that the Church is the Body of Christ, and who pray daily? Of these three parishes we are told again that the congregations are "eclectic and not remotely representative of the neighbourhood". In two, if not in all three, of these parishes, this would be quite untrue.

In the chapter on St Luke's parish, there are three factual mistakes on the first page, and there are others in the same chapter. Also in dealing with this very large parish, of all the remarks quoted from those interviewed, only one is favourable, and all the rest are negative or derogatory. Yet this is the only parish which Mr Thompson says "could be described as prosperous".

There is a number of interesting diagrams in the book, but on close examination of them they show varying sets of numbers and of years in the statistics for each parish, making it difficult to relate these numbers as a means of comparison.

Among his general conclusions, Mr Thompson asserts that in all four parishes "the parish churches are without any form of strategy". In one parish at least he never took steps to find out! Also it will be appreciated that in great urban parishes such as those under review, there is a constant movement of population, which in itself creates enormous difficulties in building up the family life of the church. This fact is never once referred to by Mr Thompson as being a possible contributory cause of failure.

While this book is of value in bringing to light some of the problems with which city parishes are faced to-day, it must surely be stated that if such a survey is to be of real value, then it ought to be carried out by a group of people, who give it more time, and who do it much more thoroughly. Only in such a survey can it be ensured that the personal opinion of the surveyor does not dominate the findings. As it stands, this book is tendentious and of pseudo-scientific value.

F. R. Pryce Parry.

Washington Rectory,
Co. Durham.

Rembrandt and the Gospel. By W. A. Visser 't Hooft. S.C.M. Press. 25s.

God is an Artist. By Adam Fox. Geoffrey Bles. 9s. 6d.

"Don't get your nose too close to my painting," Rembrandt is reputed to have said rudely, "—it smells bad." This has been taken as an injunction to view his pictures impressionistically; but he certainly meant it rather as a challenge. The fact is his work after 1641 increasingly suggests almost palpably the reek of squalor. The art of the mature Rembrandt does not attempt to captivate the eye with smooth beauty or colour, as the Italians do, and calls for a correspondingly matured taste. He came to identify himself increasingly with the off-scourings of society. To the disgust of his bourgeois contemporaries he made it clear he preferred the company of the coarsest and lowest of the community. "It was the aim of Rembrandt to paint the foulest things he could see," wrote Ruskin with distaste and with a measure of truth. He was deliberately provocative. For instance, the repellent old whore he made a naked picture of in the canal-side warehouse he used as a studio, he labelled derisively *Diana in the Bath*. He carried Saskia, with her comfortably affluent background, off to a dwelling in the slums of the ghetto, swarming with refugee Jews from Portugal, where she soon died, and his life thereafter became increasingly disreputable.

The author is not, however, concerned with such biographical detail, but with Rembrandt's remarkable devotion to the Bible and the extraordinary number of his biblical pictures, which cover the whole sweep of the Scriptures (and not merely favourite themes) as the work of no other great painter has ever done. The contrast is none the less notable. He was a wildly extravagant, sexually promiscuous, toping, plebeian rebel who literally adored low life; and yet Sir Charles Holmes could describe him as "the most profound interpreter of the human soul who ever handled brush". Visser 't Hooft's admirably cool objective monograph is accordingly welcome, for the question of Rembrandt's religion has been often inadequately discussed. He has been reckoned a Mennonite, a Collegiant, a Socinian, a dabbler in Boehme's mysticism, and even a Jew, in one quarter or another. What is one to make of so formidably great an artist who, at the time when the adorable Madonnas of international baroque nurture their nacreous infants for our delight, could con-

front us discomfortably with an ill-favoured, unwashen peasant wench who has just dropped her ugly brat into the stinking straw like any animal, with her tramp of a husband standing by? Is his transformation of Federigo Barocci's delectable Virgin, radiant on the clouds, into a pug-faced market-woman of uncertain age incongruously levitated in a bundle of rags, simply perverse? Or is he not rather emphasizing an important aspect of essential truth? This book, with its scholarly use of leading work on the subject, is at once enlightening and of lasting interest and value.

One wonders for whom Canon Fox's "informal conversation" is intended. It purports to be between five people in a dark compartment of an Italian train stuck for an incredibly long time, first in a tunnel under the Appenines and then in a limestone gorge just outside. It is an improbable situation and an equally improbable conversation, quaintly suggestive of the way a few somewhat sententious gentlemen may perhaps have talked together in university rooms at the end of the last century; except that this is practically a monologue with interjections, all curiously in the same slightly didactic voice and idiom. There is no clearly developing discussion of the theme, but a discursive ramble round with glancing references to a few poems and pictures *en route* and even a fragment of arithmetic thrown in. The creation apparently reveals God as recklessly indifferent to sheer waste of time and material. The human frame is extremely beautiful but has a horrible interior. The world is a work of art but has become damaged, and God had to set about repairing it by sending his Son into it. A dreary photograph of the Oxford canal is used to show that man is God's latest implement for finishing off this *œuvre*.

Nothing could be further from Rembrandt's penetrating vision.

John H. L. Waterson.

Stoke D'Abernon.

SHORTER NOTICES

False Alternatives at the Reformation. By Humphrey Whistler. S.P.C.K. 1s. 6d.

The writer of this pamphlet seeks to show that there were false alternatives offered at the time of the Reformation and that the divisions and differences in the Christian Church could perhaps be lessened if this fact were adequately realized. He also points out that the Anglican Church is "in quite an advantageous position to dissolve this tangle".

Perhaps, if the pamphlet is re-issued, the author could clarify his objectives and also tighten up certain points of the scholarship and phrasing. Despite these astringent remarks, the pamphlet helps us to grasp these alternatives and see where they are defective.

The Anglican Theological College, Vancouver, B.C. H. F. Woodhouse.

We have Reason to Believe. By Louis Jacobs. Vallentine, Mitchell. 15s.

The book is interesting alike in its scope, its peculiarity, and in the reflections it gives rise to in the Christian reader. The scope is given by the sub-title, "Some aspects of Jewish Theology examined in the light of modern thought". The author raises the great questions, What is meant by God? Is religious Faith an illusion? To what extent are the books attributed to Moses undermined by modern criticism? And he then puts forward a reasoned synthesis of traditional views and modernist views to lessen the difficulties, moral as well as scientific, which a literal reading of the biblical text produces in the mind of a modern man. The peculiarity arises from the synthesis being that of the Liberal Christian school of some thirty years ago. It is the more worthy for being this, and is attractive and persuasive; but it is not so up-to-the-last-minute as the word modern is apt to suggest and which the footnotes tend to underline. A footnote on p. 92 gives 1952 as the date of a quotation from J. B. Bury, whereas Bury died in 1927 and the thesis quoted predeceased him.

What is interesting is that the liberal presentment of Judaism is still attractive, while the liberal presentment of Christianity finds so small a favour to-day. The reaction to liberalism in theology has in fact struck at just those fields where Christianity goes beyond Judaism. The "Jesus of Schweitzer and Bultmann", a man convinced of the imminent end of the world, is a man too fancifully mistaken for liberals to take as the saviour of the world. The vacuum caused by the decline in liberal confidence has been filled by Authoritarians of all shades of belief. *We have Reason to Believe* is enriched by quotations from the Rabbis of old, always wise and sometimes quaint. They are an attractive feature of a book which never stoops to basing its arguments on a fallen world, or to pressing irrelevant texts to show that women never, never can be ordained, or to discussing a magical belief in a mosaic succession.

H. C. Wallace.

Saving the Appearances. By Owen Barfield. Faber and Faber. 21s.

Mr Barfield has had the courage to write a book at which a great variety of specialists will be able to take a crack. Anthropology, the history of religion, epistemology, psychology, the history of art, semantics and metaphysics do not often come together within the covers of a single volume. His aim is no less than to discuss the history of consciousness—as distinct from the history of ideas. Primitive man in a state of *participation mystique*—which he calls original participation—saw the world as relatively undifferentiated, a big buzzing blossoming confusion, in which objects were merely "stopping places for *mana*". The current state of affairs is one of idolatry, in which man hypostatizes his sense perceptions; this is closely related to the reign of natural science, and the further stage must be

one of final participation, the recognition that whatever is outside man—the "unrepresented"—is formed into images within man himself; these images are largely within man's power to reshape. A history of the images is provided by literature and the other arts, which show how different a world was that of the middle ages, for example. The jump to final participation—the recognition of man's share in creating his world—Mr Barfield daringly equates with Christ's doctrine of the Kingdom and with the power of the Logos.

I find myself ill-equipped to judge this book; stimulated, and at times exasperated by the home-made terminology, roused to questioning by the respect paid to such names as Levy-Bruhl and Rudolph Steiner, and incredulous of the suggestion that Goethe may provide an alternative to modern biological theory. Mr Barfield seems to me to do less than justice to the modern natural scientist—to the ease, for instance, with which a physicist, an agriculturalist, a psychologist and a sociologist can join with medical experts in cancer research, as is now happening in the University of London. The modern scientist is ready to see even so useful a concept as that of "species" as just one model, but not the only model, for biological thought. But for those who need to combat the literal-minded, Mr Barfield will provide. God is certainly about in the Quad.

> The prehistoric evolution of the earth as it is described for instance in the early chapters of H. G. Well's *Outline of History* was not merely never seen. It never occurred. . . . At that time, the unrepresented was behaving in such a way, that if human beings with the collective representations characteristic of the last few centuries of Western civilization had been there, the things described would also have been there (p. 37).

The sense of wonder and of ignorance with which the creature confronts his Creator should not be absent from the contemplation of a world over which man has just begun to realize his power.

M. C. Bradbrook.

Girton College,
Cambridge.

An Approach to the Theology of the Sacraments. By Neville Clark. S.C.M. Press. 8s.

This monograph is No. 17 of the Studies in Biblical Theology. Mr Clark accepts the view that there is no clear evidence that our Lord himself instituted Baptism; but the discussion of the implications of its apostolic and, from the first, universal practice is to say the least consistent with "dominical institution *in genere*", and it is well to remember in this connexion that a number even of the Tridentine Fathers held that at first Baptism was in the name of Jesus. A further comment seems legitimate. Mr Clark cites Dr Frank Gavin's *Jewish Antecedents of the Christian Sacraments*. It is arguable that he might have given even greater weight to the significance and implications of Jewish Proselyte Baptism.

When he turns to the Eucharist, Mr Clark expresses his indebtedness to J. Jeremias and to A. J. B. Higgins. He differs, however, from both in holding that the Last Supper was not the Passover meal, and from the latter in holding that *anamnesis* has "the sense of recalling or representing before God an event in the past so that it may become living, powerful and operative". It is to be wished that Mr Clark had defended this view at greater length, and, in particular, since he had referred to Higgins, that he had dealt with the latter's somewhat pontifical statement (Studies in Biblical Theology, No. 6, p. 55, n.) that Jeremias's view has been proved untenable by W. C. van Unnik in *Nederlands Theologisch Tijdschreft* (August 1950).

In regard to both Baptism and the Eucharist, Mr Clark is one of those Free Church theologians whose outlook and conclusions are in a Catholic rather than in the older Protestant tradition. A not unjust footnote (p. 60) deserves quotation: it refers to a criticism that Dom Gregory Dix "seems to suffer from a tendency to end up at the Roman Canon of the Mass wherever he may begin". Mr Clark comments: "A Free Churchman may perhaps be allowed to retort by drawing attention to some Anglicans of a different school who invariably seem to end up with the verbal inspiration of the Book of Common Prayer." On the other hand, Anglo-Catholics also might usefully devote more attention than they usually do to the fresh approaches of that school of Free Church theologians of which Mr Clark is a representative and in which it seems more than possible that he may play a notable part.

Will Spens.

Ely.

Sunrise to Eternity. By J. J. Stoudt. Pennsylvania University Press. 40s.

Master Eckhart and the Rhineland Mystics. By Jeanne Ancelet-Hustache. Translated by Hilda Graef. Longmans. 6s.

It is somewhere on record that the Oxford saint and philosopher John Illingworth was known to redraft an entire paragraph no fewer than seventeen times in order that it should perfectly express his meaning and be as readily intelligible to his readers as the subject permitted. Would that Dr Stoudt had seen fit to do the same throughout the greater part of this book. For the first three-quarters of it are little short of an outrage on the English language, the reader's "Worst Journey in the World", Dr Fowler's nightmare. "Doubtlessly", "continuingly", "hefty", "predestinarianism", several score "then's", "doddering old", "all during", "unknowability", "theodicially", "desireful", "coincidentarious", "creatural", "soulic", and so on: this is the kind of thing we have to endure for the first three hundred pages, which include several statements that must surely be without meaning to any except their author. It is also hard to put up with the rude flippancy of such typically sweeping statements as that "Boehme's philosophy of history is far more profound than

Augustine's because it is biblically grounded". As an exposition of Boehme's teaching one feels about it much as Dr Johnson must have done when he observed to his literary sounding-board, "Sir, . . . sometimes things may be made darker by definition". Add to this a somewhat inferior binding, an indecent disregard for the normal canons of punctuation, an exasperatingly unhelpful and unlovely type-set, and a price of 40s., and the paean of complaint is complete.

All this is a pity, for there is no doubt that the author has lavished much love on his book. It would seem to have suffered either from having been embarked on too soon, or the weariness of constant interruption, for much of it has the ring of jottings and of hurry.

Fortunately, this is not the whole story. In the final chapters on Man and Redemption the clouds lift and the book comes to life, as does its subject; and Boehme speaks with the power and deep originality that one hoped for from one whose influence has been so great.

By contrast, Jeanne Ancelet-Hustache's book on Meister Eckhart is pure delight, and one can only be grateful to the publishers for the care with which they have executed the truly lavish illustrations interspersed in the text. The book is a contribution to the Men of Wisdom Series, others to date being on Augustine, St Paul, and Buddha. Eckhart and his times spring to life at once, and one is sustained throughout by the sense of being guided by a humble and competent master of spirituality as of history. The translation is also thoroughly readable.

Eckhart was a sort of thirteenth-century Charles Williams, whose literary and oratorical extravagances were as harmless and therefore as ludicrous to condemn as Eckhart's own. The more the pity that public clamour aroused by private spite should have achieved such condemnation. The latest volume in the Library of Christian Classics entitled *Late Medieval Mysticism*, and containing sizeable selections from his writings, should make an excellent sequel to this admirable introduction.

J. K. Byrom.

Cheadle Hulme.

The Mersey Mission to Seamen, 1856–1956. By M. R. Kingsford. The Abbey Press. 9s. 6d.

Much research has gone into the making of this book and the facts which it recounts deserve to be widely known. The documents reveal the possibilities and the problems of a specialized type of mission over a period of 100 years, and give us some feeling for the "atmosphere" of the Church, especially during the first part of this period. The story is spoilt, however by the over-obtrusion of the author's own point of view. For instance, in connexion with a mission of this type, which seeks to minister to all seamen whatever their race or creed, it is a pity to revive outdated antagonisms within the Church of England. The closing suggestions for the future of the Mission tend to give the impression that the Church of England exists primarily for its sake. Nor did I find the constant peppering of quota-

tions from Latin authors and from the Bible a help to concentration on the essentials of the history.

MARGARET KANE.

MALTBY.

ISRAEL AND THE ARAMEANS OF DAMASCUS. By Merrill F. Unger. James Clarke and Co. 21s.

This is a competent and well-informed account which brings together a great deal of information from widely scattered sources. The early origins of the Aramean peoples and their appearance on the historical scene (in the twelfth century B.C. rather than earlier) is carefully examined, and their rise to power and their continuance alongside Israel up to the fall of the Northern Kingdom is closely documented. Valuable comments are made on the vexed question of dates during the period covered by the biblical *Books of the Kings*, and related archaeological and linguistic matters are patiently discussed. It is not an exciting book, but it will be of value to the specialist in Israelite history and the biblical criticism related thereto.

S. B. FROST.

MCGILL UNIVERSITY,
MONTREAL.

BOOKS RECEIVED

(*Mention here neither implies nor precludes subsequent comment.*)

ABINGDON PRESS (NEW YORK): Cyril C. Richardson, *The Doctrine of the Trinity* ($3).

EPWORTH PRESS: Edward Rogers, *That they might have Life* [meditations on the meaning of Easter] (5s.).

LONGMANS: Henri de Lubac, S.J., *Further Paradoxes* (15s.).

LUTTERWORTH PRESS: Stephen Olford, *Christianity and You* [in the "Preaching for To-day" series] (5s. 6d.); John R. W. Stott, *What Christ thinks of the Church* [expository addresses on the letters to the Seven Churches] (5s. 6d.).

MOWBRAY: Anton Baumstark, *Comparative Liturgy* (35s.).

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION PRESS: Norman Bull, *From Prophecy to Law*—Senior Lessons, Vol. VII (6s. 6d.); Elsie Broadie, *Prophets of Judah*—The Chosen Nation: Book Three [handbook for teachers] (6s. and 5s.).

S.C.M. PRESS: R. E. C. Browne, *The Ministry of the Word* (8s. 6d.); John T. Martin, *Christ our Passover* (8s.); A. Allan McArthur, *The Christian Year and Lectionary Reform* (25s.).

S.P.C.K.: Thomas Wood, *The Pastoral Responsibility of the Church To-day* [inaugural lecture of the Professor of Pastoral Theology at Lampeter] (1s. 6d.).

S.P.C.K. AND NATIONAL SOCIETY: Henry James Burgess, *Enterprise in Education* (25s.).

THAMES AND HUDSON: Brian Branston, *The Lost Gods of England* (25s.).

TYNDALE PRESS: J. Stafford Wright, *The Building of the Second Temple* [revised and expanded version of the Tyndale O.T. Lecture, 1952] (1s. 6d.); J. Stafford Wright, *The Date of Ezra's Coming to Jerusalem* [reprint of the Tyndale O.T. Lecture, 1947] (1s. 6d.).

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